Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended). A node in an optical communication network, said node being connected in a transmission path for carrying multiple traffic data channels including wavelength division multiplexed channels carried in a first wavelength band and at least one service channel associated with said wavelength division multiplexed channels and carried on at least one further wavelength separate from said first wavelength band, said node including

a set of first filter elements for adding at least one of said wavelength division multiplexed data channel wavelengths to said transmission path and dropping at least one of said wavelength division multiplexed channel wavelengths from said transmission path,

an extraction element for dropping said at least one service channel wavelength from said transmission path, said extraction element being arranged upstream of said first set of filter elements,

a splitting means arranged to receive optical signals from said extraction element and to separate said service channel wavelength from said second wavelength band, wherein said splitting means are ~~directly~~ connected to said coupling means via

a bypass path for relaying signals carried on a ~~said~~ second wavelength band from said splitting means to said coupling means, and

a combining element for adding said at least one service channel wavelength to said transmission path, said combining element being arranged downstream of said set of first set of filter elements, wherein said extraction and combining elements are adapted to drop and add, respectively, said at least one second wavelength band in addition to said at least one service channel wavelength, and passively relay said first wavelength band, said at least one second wavelength band being separate from said first wavelength band and carrying at least one optical traffic data channel.

2. (Currently Amended) A node as claimed in claim 1, wherein said at least one second wavelength band carries non-wavelength-division-multiplexed traffic channels.

3. (Currently Amended) A node as claimed in claim 1, wherein said at least one service channel wavelength and said at least one second wavelength band are arranged on the same side of the wavelength spectrum relative to said first wavelength band, wherein said extraction element and said combining element drop and add, respectively all wavelengths on the side of the spectrum containing said service channel wavelength and second wavelength band.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) A node as claimed in claim 1, further comprising said coupling means arranged to feed optical signals to said combining ~~means~~ element and to couple said service channel wavelength with said second wavelength band.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously Presented) A node as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first wavelength band is centered around 1550 nm and said second wavelength band is centered around 1300 nm.

8. (Previously Presented) A node as claimed in claim 7, wherein said service channel is carried at 1510 nm.

9. (Currently Amended) An optical communications network for carrying a first wavelength band carrying wavelength division multiplexed optical data channels

and a second wavelength band carrying at least one optical service channel associated with said wavelength division multiplexed channels, comprising:

optical nodes connected to a transmission path, each optical node having

a first set of add/drop elements for adding and dropping optical data channels carried in said first wavelength band and

additional add and drop elements for adding and dropping, respectively, said at least one optical service channel carried in said second wavelength band ~~waveband~~, wherein said additional drop element is arranged upstream of said first set of add/drop elements and said additional add element is arranged downstream of said first set of add/drop elements, wherein said communication network carries a third wavelength band carrying optical traffic data, wherein said additional add and drop elements are arranged to add and drop at least said third wavelength band in addition to said second wavelength band, wherein each said optical node includes a bypass path for said third wavelength band ~~directly~~ connecting said splitting means to said second add element via a coupling means; ~~and~~ said splitting means arranged to receive optical signals from said second drop element and to separate said second wavelength band from said third wavelength band.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A network as claimed in claim 9, further comprising

said coupling means arranged to feed optical signals to said second add element and to couple signals carried on said second wavelength band with signals carried on said third wavelength band.

12. (Canceled)